

Country profile

POLAND



Habitat for Humanity in Poland

Habitat for Humanity Poland has been operating since 1992. It was the first Habitat's branch in Europe. We operate in Warsaw and Gliwice.

We respond to poverty housing through a number of activities, including construction of new houses, renovations of apartments, as well as advocacy and microloan programs. So far we have helped over 1000 families in Poland.

The housing need in Poland

According to the national statistics 6,5 million people in Poland (15 percent of the population) live in poverty housing, i.e have no place to live or are living in substandard conditions (with no bathrooms and toilets, no central heating or technically unsafe buildings). Poland has the lowest in Europe rate of number of homes for its population (1000: 327), consequently more than 3.2 million families have to share a flat with others, around 11.9 million Poles live in overcrowded facilities and 44 percent of young people (25-34 years of age) still live with their parents, with every third of them never moving out to live independently.

Poverty housing in Poland affects in particular single parents and families with many children (3 plus). According to OECD report, every 5th child in Poland lives in poverty housing, which is the worst situation in the region. Other affected groups include people with disabilities, homeless people living in shelters, elderly and young families. Approximately 60 percent of the population cannot afford to meet their housing needs on commercial housing market and is in need of support.

How Habitat addresses the need in Poland

Habitat for Humanity activities in Poland range from building new affordable houses to renovating condominium blocks and advocacy initiatives. The renovation program, in particular, has turned into a viable answer to the long search for an efficient way to help more families in need. Renovation projects have been completed throughout the country in partnership with homeowners' associations.

COUNTRY FACTS*

Capital	Warsaw
Main country facts	joined NATO in 1999, joined EU in 2004
Population	38.5 million
Urbanization	61 percent live in cities
Life expectancy	77 years
Unemployment rate	11.5 percent
Population living below poverty line	16 percent

*Sources: CIA World Factbook, World Bank, UN

HABITAT FACTS

When Habitat started in Poland
1992

Families served
More than 1,000

Volunteers hosted
More than 1,700

Housing solutions
Renovations and repairs
Energy-efficient homes
Condominium renovations
Vulnerable groups and advocacy



Urgent Intervention Project in Wyszów: Temporary Social Housing for Families in Crisis

This tri-lateral partnership project has mobilized a local NGO-MONAR, the municipal authorities of Wyszów, and HFH Poland, to proceed with complete renovation of a building, in which MONAR runs a temporary shelter for evicted families and single mothers. With a non-profit loan, technical assistance and volunteer labor, the partnership will lead to the renovation of interiors of a 2-story building, adapting it for the needs of social housing. The building will be used as crisis intervention centre & temporary housing for 18 families at a time. Five families already live in the building: mostly single mothers.

Renovation at Karczewska Street (Warsaw)

The goal of this project is the renovation of the dilapidated staircase and gateway in a multi-family apartment block in the South Praga District, Warsaw. In response to the inhabitant's initiative concerning the renovation of the common area of pre-war building, HFH Poland will mobilize donors, volunteers, and secure the materials needed for the repair. The residents themselves will also take part in the renovation. The project, scheduled for late 2014, will improve the lives of 31 families who live in the social apartments at Karczewska Street.

Energy Efficiency Improvement of the Social Housing in Targówek District (Warsaw)

Within the framework of global partnership between Habitat and Procter & Gamble, a renovation project was implemented in 2013 aiming at improving the alarming condition of two social buildings located in the Targówek district (Warsaw). Using a P&G local communities grant, 44 poor families living in the buildings benefited from improved energy efficiency (water/thermal insulation of foundations) and reduced heating costs. In the fall, three groups of corporate volunteers worked on the

project, helping with thermal modernization, while two more groups will help in the spring of 2014, creating a playground for local children. Besides the cost-energy effects, the initiative has mobilized the municipal authorities to further invest in improving living conditions of the 44 families by funding the external insulation of the walls. In 2014, a new project of this type was proposed for funding to P&G.

Meet a Habitat family

Mr Zbyszek Ściana made a remarkable way from being an alcoholic and living on the street 20 years ago, to becoming a good husband and father of two boys, a board member of Barka Foundation – a local NGO working with the homeless and running a small social enterprise based on the principles of community-supported agriculture in the country site.

The family have stable source of income but inadequate accommodation, and continue living in a communal house with homeless people undergoing rehabilitation. An independent family home became the dream for the Ścianas.

What you can do

You can help Polish families improve their living conditions by taking one or more of the following actions:

DONATE

USD \$: habitateurope.org/donate/poland

EUR €: habitatforhumanity.org.uk/donate/poland

VOLUNTEER

Join one of the scheduled Global Village trips to Poland or lead your own. For more information go to: habitat.org/gv

TITHE

Establish a strong and rewarding tithe partnership to help build houses globally! Quote **813700, POLAND** on your checks sent to: Habitat for Humanity International, Attn: Affiliate Tithe, 121 Habitat St. Americus, GA 31709



To learn more about Habitat projects in Poland please contact us.

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